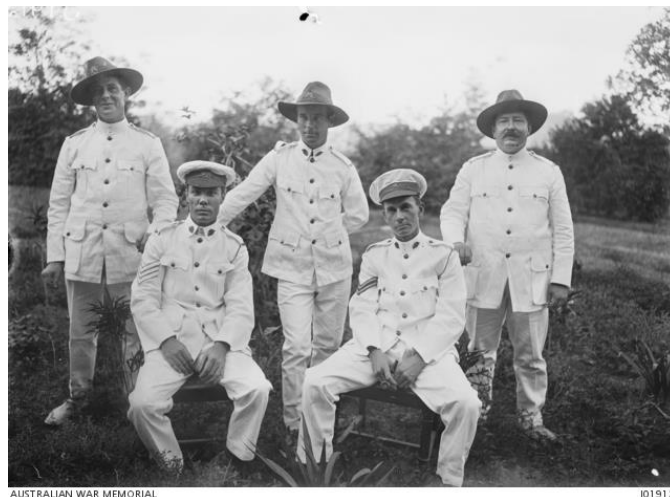


James Allen Walker was born in Pretoria, South Africa, on 15th June 1890, the son of James William and Cathleen Agnes Walker (nee Allen). On 11 August 1914 enlisted in the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force at age 24. On his attestation paper he listed his trade as 'compositor' and gave his mother, Mrs Kathleen Walker, "Allendale", Hillbrow St, Johannesburg, South Africa as his next of kin. His Regimental Number was 175.

On 19 August he left Sydney on the HMA Transport *Berrima* for training in Townsville and then to Port Moresby. With supporting RAN ships *Sydney*, *Encounter*, *Parramatta*, *Warrego* and *Yarra* and submarines *AE1* and *AE2*, *Berrima* left Port Moresby on 7 September arriving in Rabaul on 11 September.

On 24 October, James Walker was promoted to Corporal and put in charge of the government printing office in Rabaul. It is therefore highly probable that he was responsible for the GRI overprinting of the German New Guinea stamps that were then used for postage from Rabaul and other New Guinea locations. Cpl Walker returned to Australia on 21 February 1915 and after a period in hospital suffering from malaria, he was discharged on 4 March 1915 after 206 days of service.



Group of unidentified printers in Rabaul. Cpl Walker is probably the soldier seated on the right.

On 12 May 1915, he enlisted in the 19th Battalion, AIF, Regimental Number 1111 and left Sydney aboard the *CERAMIC*, departing on 25th June 1915 with the rank of Corporal. He arrived on Gallipoli on 21 August and remained there until the evacuation. In a statement Cpl Walker says,

"While on the Peninsula with the Battalion I had charge of a Section of the Firing Line for nine weeks and the following 9 weeks was Corporal in charge of an Outpost nightly without relief.

Cpl Walker disembarked in Alexandria from the *Mudros* on 7 January 1916.

In February 1916, Cpl Walker faced a Court-Martial charged with "When on service joining in a mutiny in forces belonging to His Majesty's Australian Imperial Forces, in that he, at Katoomba Camp, Canal Defences, No.2 Sec. B on the 4/2/16 joined in a mutiny by combining with other soldiers of the said 19th Bn to disobey an order to parade in full marching order." He was found guilty and sentenced to 3 years Penal Servitude and reduced in the ranks to private. This was subsequently reduced to 18 months and he left the Suez on board the *Serang Bee* to serve his sentence at the Darlinghurst Detention Barracks.

Following a successful appeal for a sentence reduction, Pte Walker embarked on the HMAT *Benalla* on 10 May 1917, with the 7th Reinforcements, 36th Battalion, disembarking in Plymouth on 19 July 1917. He spent 6 months as an instructor at Southern Bomber Command School (in what is not clear) and in December 1917 was posted to the 36th Battalion, then in Belgium. He was initially wounded (Gun Shot Wound to the buttocks) in March 1918 and a second time with a Gunshot Wound to the right shoulder, this second wound resulting in his repatriation to the Kitchener Military Hospital in Brighton.

From there he we returned to Australia aboard the *Nestor* on 12 December 1918 and subsequently discharged on 28 March 1919 – quite remarkable in a man who served in Rabaul, Gallipoli and Belgium whilst also having time to serve out an 18-month sentence in Australia. He travelled from Sydney to Rabaul and back, Sydney to Suez and back and then Sydney to the UK and back - all in a 4-year period!

On 15th June 1921 James married Constance Lillian Irene Nash at St Michaels Stanmore.

James died on 5th May 1979 and is buried at French's Forest Cemetery.